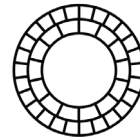


# CASE STUDY



**VSCO**

ARTIFACT  
UPRISING

App company changing how we create

**ORGANIZATION:**

Most social networks have some kind of quantifiable aspect. We can like a photo, retweet a witty comment, or give praise another way. That can cause lots of social anxiety—how do you feel when your post doesn't get a single 'Like' or retweet?

Oakland-based VSCO is setting out to change that. The company empowers people everywhere to create, discover, and connect through its apps. To accomplish a real sense of community, there's no 'Liking' or commenting on photos. Life isn't always pretty. Sometimes it's broken, but it's always honest. VSCO wants its users to feel free to share anything near and dear to their hearts.

**CHALLENGE:**

Migrate from non-native environment to AWS

**SOLUTION:**

Managed Amazon Web Services

***DATAPIPE***



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# EMBRACING THE HUMAN ELEMENT OF ART BY MIGRATING TO AWS

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## THE CHALLENGE

VSCO's apps explore the humanness of people instead of simply quantifying how good they are, or judging how professional their work may be. Users can upload their work directly to VSCO's platform, using it to edit photos, with enhancements – including white-balancing, filters and journaling – readily available. One user [documented his mother's fight with cancer](#), displaying the emotions he and his family felt during a very trying time.

In 2015, VSCO acquired Artifact Uprising, a company that creates tangible photo books, prints and gifts for digital photos. Artifact Uprising was using a non-native environment and didn't believe it was the right strategic technology in the long term. VSCO has more than 30 million monthly active users across its platform consuming 5 billion images, so it's imperative that both VSCO and Artifact Uprising have reliable infrastructures users can depend on. VSCO wanted experts who are native to cloud to help take Artifact Uprising's existing non-native environment and build it correctly via AWS.

VSCO's Artifact Uprising DevOps team is small and scrappy. They're quite adept at what they do – they all have significant experience with Chef,

using it to configure their servers and developer machines – the switch to AWS required additional bandwidth the team just didn't have. When speaking with their Amazon representative, VSCO was pointed in the direction of Datapipe.



## THE SOLUTION

Since migrating to AWS, VSCO has already begun seeing great benefits: "Operationally, AWS is faster and more configurable than what was being used," said Zo Obradovic, VP of Engineering at VSCO. "The new environment is faster, more reliable, and cheaper. All three are pretty important things!"

Perhaps most importantly, this solution had a big impact on the stability of VSCO's brand. Artifact Uprising had experienced random reboots on several occasions with its old solution, and migrating over to AWS allowed them to have confidence going into the holiday season, which is the biggest time of the year for the company. Knowing they could rely on their environment and focus on maintaining a great experience for their community members was reassuring. Had they remained with their current environment, VSCO is unsure they'd have that same level of confidence. Any problems would be both a loss financially and a hit to their sterling reputation.

## ENTER DATAPIPE

With the support of Datapipe, VSCO's Artifact Uprising was able to seamlessly migrate from its existing environment to AWS. From the start, VSCO was impressed with Datapipe's knowledge and expertise. "Datapipe inspired a lot of confidence, and their team clearly had the technological expertise," said Obradovic. "Between those two things, we felt they could get the job done."

Datapipe is a strategic partner with Chef, and VSCO felt comfortable knowing the team had the expertise to leverage the platform properly when migrating to AWS. If VSCO or Artifact Uprising's developers ever had a question about deployment, coding, or anything else, they had a great support system in Datapipe. When it comes time to scale, the foundation is there for success.

# OPERATIONAL IMPACT

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## RESULTS & BENEFITS

- Utilizing a faster, more reliable, and less expensive environment
- Increased confidence in ability to deliver top-notch content to more than 30 million community members
- All teams now have a long-term foundation of AWS infrastructure

“Chef is a huge focus of ours – in fact, we’re a Chef certified partner – so we were able to leverage our team’s extensive knowledge of that tool with how the VSCO internal team was already operating,” said Patrick McClory, SVP of Platform Engineering and Delivery Services, Datapipe. “We used Vagrant and Packer to build the strong foundation that wasn’t being provided with their non-native existing environment. Now, VSCO can mimic their community members’ experience to develop a better product and easily pack it up and ship it into the real world. Using these three tools and working with VSCO’s internal team, we’ve been able to really streamline their operations and deliver a better experience to their community members, ultimately strengthening their business.”

“Technology expertise is the number one thing we look for when hiring an outside firm,” said Obradovic. “If you’re working in technology, you have to know what you’re doing. Everything else is secondary. And of course, you want a positive working relationship, too. Datapipe had both the attitude and the aptitude, and I feel as comfortable as I possibly could in having AWS as the long-term foundation for our infrastructure.”

# ***DATAPIPE***

Datapipe is the managed hosting and cloud services provider with the most complete set of services, global locations, and industry leading partners. Datapipe delivers choice, control and confidence in architecting, deploying, and managing multi-platform hybrid IT solutions tailored to individual customer needs. Optimizing mission-critical and day-to-day enterprise IT operations, Datapipe enables businesses to transform, innovate, and scale. Backed by a global team of experience professionals and next-generation data centers Datapipe provides comprehensive security, governance, orchestration, and analytics solutions. Analyst firm Gartner has named Datapipe a leader in the 2014 and 2015 Magic Quadrant for Cloud-Enabled Managed Hosting.

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